



# Annual Report 2023

## *Celebrating the Helpers*



Executive Assistants  
First Responders  
Accountants  
Behavior Technicians  
Committed  
Therapists  
Respite Providers  
Functional Support Managers  
Home Providers  
Receptionists  
Creative  
Neighbors  
Respite Providers  
Resident Coordinators  
Occupational Therapists  
Families  
Board Members  
Trainers  
Receptionists  
Case Managers  
Occupational Therapists  
Physical Therapists  
Helpers  
Janitors  
Social Workers  
Respite Providers  
Functional Support Managers  
Psychiatrists  
Dedicated  
Families  
Case Managers  
Compassionate  
Clients  
Occupational Therapists  
Interns  
Dedicated  
Neighbors  
Social Workers  
Certified Recovery Support Workers  
Bus Drivers  
Behavior Technicians  
Clients  
Psychologists  
Perseverance  
Families  
Psychiatrists  
Interns  
Administrators  
Trainers  
Respite Providers  
Janitors  
Home Providers  
Committed  
Perseverance  
Therapists  
Interns  
Inspirational  
Accountants  
Psychologists  
Resident Coordinators  
Bus Drivers  
Home Providers  
Nurses  
Home Providers  
Compassionate  
Physical Therapists  
Teachers  
Trainers  
Nurses  
Administrators  
Physical Therapists  
Direct Support Professionals  
Board Members  
Social Workers  
Clients  
Bus Drivers  
Direct Support Professionals  
Case Managers  
Resilience  
Psychiatrists  
Therapists  
Trainers  
Resilience

# Neighbors

# H

# Helpers

# First Responders



## Community Partners Rises to Meet Historic System Change



**Chris Kozak,**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Resilient, dedicated, committed, flexible, inspirational, compassionate, caring, beacons of light – these are the words that come to mind when I think about the staff at Community Partners. This year, with workforce limitations and increased community need, our staff rose and tackled the largest change in the developmental services arena since the Laconia State School closed. And they did it with a level of professionalism that we can all be proud of. It is truly a pleasure to lead such an incredible group of individuals that never lose sight of our mission.

In 2023, we began implementing the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) mandate that developmental services agencies providing case management may not offer clients additional services. For some individuals that means we no longer provide case management. For others, it means we are no longer the service provider for community participation or residential services. As the Area Agency we will continue to find ways to integrate services to ensure fluid movement across our programs.

One area we are developing is a streamlined process for moving individuals engaged with our Early Supports and Services program into our Youth and Family Services program without needing a traditional intake. We are also working to help individuals better manage their health through increased coordination with primary care. And our newest initiative looks to add more robust substance use disorder treatment into our service array.

Traditionally, as a community mental health center (CMHC) our focus has been on treating people with severe and persistent mental illnesses or emotional disturbances. Today, we are seeing more individuals with a mental illness also struggling with a co-occurring substance use disorder. We intend to broaden the scope of our CMHC to become a community behavioral health center. This means that this year we will add an array of substance use disorder services designed to reduce barriers to treatment and recovery for this vulnerable population. The diseases are not independent of each other, and neither should their services be.

Thank you for your continued support! I look forward to another year of working with our tremendous staff.



## Wayne Goss, President of the Board of Directors

As President of the Board of Directors, myself and all the board members take seriously our role to oversee proper fiscal management of public dollars and to ensure that the Agency delivers on its mission. As I reflect on nearly a decade of tenure as a board member, I am continually astounded by the dedication and commitment of the Agency's most valuable resource, our staff. They tirelessly seek solutions to improve the lives of our clients.

This has been a time of transition at the Agency. During the last two years that I have served as President, we navigated the end of Brian's 27 years of service as our Executive Director, followed by his untimely passing. The board conducted a nationwide search for a new CEO, and we were pleased to find the best hire was our community mental health center COO. Chris Kozak completed his first successful year as CEO in May 2023.

This year staff transitioned through the administrative changes and mandates imposed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and Bureau of Developmental Services. This work consumed countless hours of staff time. Despite that, our staff never wavered from their client-centered focus.

Staff across the Agency transitioned through the end of the public health emergency and returned to delivering high quality in-person services and meeting individuals' needs in their community. Throughout all these transitions, the Agency remains in a sound fiscal position.

There is one last transition on the horizon as I step down from my role as Board President. It has been an incredible journey working with so many wonderful people. But it is time for me to turn the Board President reigns over to our Vice President, Bryant Hardwick. Bryant has been steadfast in his role on the Board over the years and I am confident in his ability to step in as Board President. Serving on this board has been an honor I will cherish forever.

## The Board of Directors and Staff Honor Brian Collins' Legacy at Community Partners

Across NH, Brian was known for understanding the complex human services systems and his creative, compassionate problem solving. During his 27-year tenure at Community Partners, he brought a unique perspective borne out of his life experiences. Brian was always fueled by the work itself, meeting the daily needs of individuals and families, working with and around obstacles. His disarming humor, curiosity and engagement of all people led to human service innovations and creative solutions. To honor his legacy for the organization two initiatives were created.

### 1. The Brian Collins Impact Award

Each fall we will solicit statewide nominations of individuals, families and organizations who embody Brian's passion, creativity and dedication to positively impacting vulnerable NH individuals and families. The recipient will be honored with a commemorative plaque and \$270, highlighting Brian's 27 years with Community Partners, during our November annual meeting.

### 2. The Brian Collins Family Support Fund

When Brian passed many donations were received in memory of him. These have been held and will be used in a new fund named the "Brian Collins Family Support Fund." This fund will be a designated resource for the individuals and families we serve to meet needs not met by other means.



To donate to the Brian Collins Family Support Fund, use your phone's camera to scan this QR code. This will take you to the Community Partners' donation page. Please be sure to indicate in the field provided: Brian Collins Family Support Fund

## Pete Eldredge Announced as the First Brian Collins Impact Award Recipient

Pete Eldredge has been a familiar face at Community Partners, serving as a close ally yet always challenging the Area Agency and state offices to continue to improve services for people with developmental disabilities. He was among the first organizers who advocated for and monitored the closing of Laconia State School, where people with developmental disabilities were warehoused until the 1980s.

As the single parent of a daughter with developmental disabilities, Pete is a knowledgeable and tireless advocate who is always putting forth efforts to help improve her quality of life. Over the years Pete has not stopped with improving only his daughter's life, he has been constantly involved with organizing other parents of children with developmental disabilities and provided them with invaluable education and resources to empower their own advocacy. Pete has served for 30 years on the Family Advisory Council for Community Partners, where he uses his unique perspective to ensure the Area Agency delivers high quality services. His humble wisdom and collaborative style paved the way for many families to feel confident enough to advocate for their own children or relatives as well as those others who may need support. The unanimous selection of Pete as the first recipient of The Brian Collins Impact Award was inspired by Pete's many years of collaborating with Brian to empower and motivate others to become champions for people with disabilities.



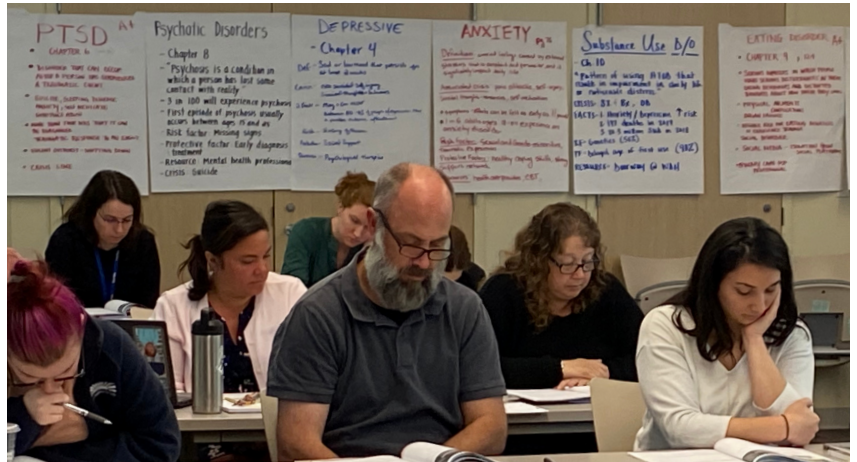
The unanimous selection of Pete as the first recipient of The Brian Collins Impact Award was inspired by Pete's many years of collaborating with Brian to empower and motivate others to become champions for people with disabilities.

**Congratulations Pete!**

## People Throughout Strafford County are Learnings Skills to Help Someone in Emotional Distress

The Agency just completed the first of a five-year Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant to improve mental health awareness through the evidenced based curriculum *Mental Health First Aid* (MHFA). MHFA is designed to teach anyone how to recognize and respond to someone in emotional distress. Community Partners staff are coordinating local and regional certified Mental Health First Aid instructors to provide training for school personnel, teens, first responders, veterans, caregivers of our elder population, and the public at large. The goal is to reach nearly 2,000 by the end of the grant in September 2027.

Trainees learn how to recognize the risk factors and warning signs in someone who may be experiencing a mental health challenge or crisis, including thoughts of suicide, how to approach someone and then administer (mental health) first aid. The class highlights that each of us can be a resource to someone experiencing a mental health challenge by providing a non-judgmental listening ear, knowledge of local resources and a message of hope that recovery is possible. For more acute or crisis situations, trainees learn how to assess the situation for everyone's safety, de-escalate as needed and then when to bring in a referral partner such as the New Hampshire Rapid Response Access Point, first responders, primary care physician or clinicians at the community mental health center. This next level of support will lead to professional screening, assessment, consultation and treatment or referral as appropriate. In addition, crisis hotlines and text lines are consistently recognized throughout the course.



The certification program reached 542 people in the first year. Individuals trained included Rochester and Dover city leaders, police officers, teachers, first responders, camp counselors, faith leaders, businesspeople, and non-profit representatives. The entire Farmington School District staff as well as cohorts from Somersworth, Milton and Rochester school districts graduated from the Youth Mental Health First Aid module, adding to the staffs' toolbox for working with youth and their unique mental health challenges. Dover High School completed its second year implementing Teen Mental Health First Aid, a six-session module designed to train an entire grade level of 10th graders to recognize and respond to a peer in emotional distress. Somersworth High School revamped their health and PE schedule to be able to accommodate Teen Mental Health First Aid which debuted in September of 2023.

Moving into year two of the five-year SAMHSA grant shows no signs of waning interest from community members throughout Strafford County to take Mental Health First Aid. If you or your organization would like more information about MHFA, please contact Suzanne Weete at [suzanneweete@communitypartnersnh.org](mailto:suzanneweete@communitypartnersnh.org) to schedule an information session or class.



**Mental Health  
FIRST AID**

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

According to Suzanne Weete, an Adult, Youth and Teen Mental Health First Aid instructor, “Not only does this class equip people with a framework to help someone in emotional distress, it also goes a long way in removing the stigma and shame that is often experienced by someone experiencing a mental health challenge. This class also plays a role in being more willing to offer help, just as one would do if helping someone with cancer or a broken arm. People don’t choose when they will experience a mental health challenge, but we all can choose to be part of the solution by offering help to someone in need.”

## Modern Technology Helping Veterans Age in Place at Home

The plethora of technological gadgets and gizmo's available today that "seemingly" help people can make anyone feel "less than" or frustrated about their use, rendering them useless even before the gizmo is set up!

At the same time, these well-intentioned devices can provide creative and even unforeseen uses that could keep people safe and maybe even save lives, especially for our aging population.

Andy Schachat, one of Community Partner's ServiceLink staff members, successfully integrated the use of the Echo Dot (also known by the nickname of "Alexa"), into the lives of veterans living at home.

Through a collaboration with the Manchester VA, Andy, and other ServiceLink representatives, work with a VA program called Veteran Directed Care (VDC). VDC is a program that provides Vets with a monthly budget to spend on things such as in-home support professionals and assistive and adaptive equipment. The VDC's goal is to keep Veterans at home while they age, allowing them to maintain a better quality of life, versus moving to assisted living.

Andy learned that a Veteran needed to get up at night to use the restroom and was in jeopardy of falling because the lights weren't on. With the use of "Alexa" this Vet was able to wake up, call to Alexa to turn the lights on as needed, therefore helping him navigate where he needed to be.

Another couple were able to use Alexa for an even wider variety of purposes. In this home, the Veteran started to show signs of dementia. Alexa connected him to brighter days with the ability to access music from his youth and connect him



to the world by relaying current news and other entertainment. Alexa also opened a whole new purpose, allowing this Vet and his granddaughter to connect in new ways. They take turns listening to each other's music and stories on-demand. They have even found a way to access jokes allowing them to share laughter and fun with each other.

His wife recalls another way they used Alexa that only technology could perform. Her husband experiences night terrors. One night he awoke, terribly frightened thinking he was on a boat that was sinking. His wife, who comes from a nursing background, recognized her husband's terror, and knew she needed to ground him back to reality. She called out twice,

"Alexa, where are we?" Alexa answered by relaying their address, which immediately diminished her husbands' distress. When asked why she felt Alexa was able to ground her husband and not her she replied, "People lie, machines don't."

Through Andy's efforts, the Echo Dot, a.k.a. Alexa, is now a VDC approved device that veterans can purchase to assist them at home. The success of using Alexa has caught the attention of the VDC's coordinator in Manchester, who plans to promote "Alexa" to other VDC program coordinators nationwide.

### *Community Partners Mission and Vision*

#### *Mission*

Community Partners connects our clients and their families to the opportunities and possibilities for participation in their communities.

#### *Vision*

We serve those who experience emotional distress, mental illnesses, substance abuse disorders, developmental disabilities, chronic health needs, acquired brain disorder, as well as those who are in need of information and referral to access long term supports and services. We strive to be an organization that consistently delivers outstanding services and supports that are person-focused and dedicated to full participation in communities. We will take leadership roles in educating our community, network, families and the public to reduce stigma and to increase self-determination and personal empowerment. We are committed to evidence-based and outcome-driven practices. We will invest in our staff to further professional development and foster an environment of innovation.

# Community Partners' Financial Overview

## July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

*Thank you for your support.*

Community Partners continues to deliver outstanding services by employing new ways to serve our most vulnerable community members through innovative technology, creative programming and expanded community connections.

### Revenues

Medicaid	\$39,214,108
Contracts	\$4,052,995
Client Resources	\$2,438,933
Grant Income	\$1,665,058
Medicare	\$298,017
Other Revenue	\$175,498
Interest Income	\$143,677
Public Support	\$87,326
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$48,075,612</b>

- Abraham Burtman Charity Trust
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- Autism Foundation
- Bishop's Fund - Respite
- Davis Family Fund
- DF Richard
- DHHS - Housing and Homeless Initiative
- Dobbles Foundation
- Dover CDBG
- Hesed Foundation- Respite
- Holy Rosary Credit Union
- iHeart Radio
- Liberty Mutual – Respite
- Lisa Libraries - Books for Library Program
- Mary Lamprey Trust
- Monarch School of New England
- NAMI NH

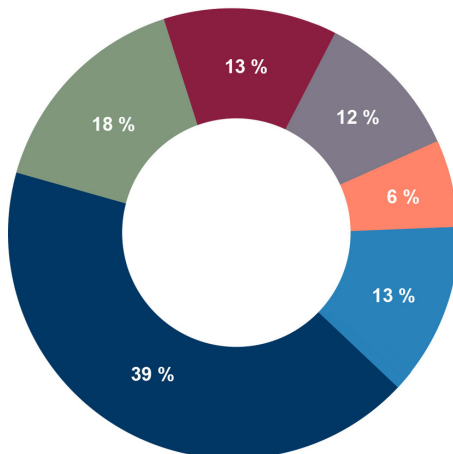


### Expenses

Combined Residential & Day, Residential Services	\$17,721,937
Consolidated Services	\$5,904,742
Early Support & Youth & Family Services	\$4,948,356
Day Program & Community Support	\$4,488,666
Other	\$4,326,597
General Management	\$4,022,023
Adult Services	\$3,265,400
Case Management	\$1,165,431
Family Support	\$804,614
Emergency Services	\$799,401
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$47,447,167</b>
Increase in Net Assets	\$628,445

- Newburyport Bank – Rental Assistance
- Newfound Area Charitable Fund
- New Hampshire Community Behavioral Health Association
- New Hampshire Council on Developmental Disabilities
- NHCF- NAMI Community Support Specialist, Respite & Parenting Groups
- NHCF – General Operating Grant
- Northeast Delta Dental - Dental Program
- Rekindling Curiosity
- Rotary Club of Portsmouth District #7780
- SAMHSA – 5th year ProHealth Grant
- SAMHSA - Mental Health Awareness Grant
- Seacoast Mental Health Center
- Schwab/Seacrest Fund
- Strafford County
- Walk with Ease - Walking program for clients of BH & DS
- Waterville Valley Adaptive Sports

## Community Partners' Services Delivered By Program ~ July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023



# Served by Program	
Behavioral Health (BH) - Adult	1798
BH Youth and Family	833
Emergency Services	583
Developmental Services - Adult	552
Family Support	272
Early Supports and Services	625
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4663</b>

\*\*Count is duplicated when client receives services in more than one of the programs listed above

**Community Partners is grateful for the dozens of community members who have chosen this organization to give financial support.**

**This list shows donations received from July 1, 2022 ~ June 30, 2023**

**Partners \$1000+**

R.J. Allister, M.D.  
Judge Daniel Cappiello  
Jim Davis  
Pete Eldredge  
William Harbron  
Charles Kendall  
David and Ann Landry  
John Mettee  
Kathleen Stocker  
Clay Tedeschi  
Margaret Thrasher  
Doug and Katie Wheeler  
Norm and Staci Vetter

**Benefactors \$500 - \$999**

Paul Cox  
David Deutsch  
David Dupont  
Gary Gletow and Christine Trayner  
Miriam Laliberte  
Anthony McManus and Joann Rohde  
Paul Muther and Ulla Dagert  
Mason Obrey  
Margaret O'Hara  
Mark Santoski and Maggie Wallace

**Patrons \$250-\$499**

Brent and Lena Berc  
Marjorie Briand  
David and Lindsay Chorney  
Patricia A. Coolidge  
Elizabeth DesJardins  
Dan Cronin  
Michael Gershon  
Peter and Tracy Greenwood  
Bryant and Kerry Hardwick  
Robert and Sharon Latture  
Bob and Judy Lemaire  
Thomas Lydon  
Vincente Mas and Susan Hixson Mas  
Jed Mettee

Richard and Barbara Muther  
Sylvester Family Revocable Trust

**Supporters \$100 - \$249**

Bill and Kristine Baber  
Jim and Ellen Bassett  
Donald and Kathleen Boisclair  
Tom and Ann Boyd  
Christopher Boys and Judith LaBoissiere  
Ernest Brake  
Michael Capone  
John and Betsy Carroll  
Francis Creedon  
Charles and Joyce Davis  
Steve and Kathy Dolan  
Pamela Dushan  
David Emerson  
Paula Estabrook  
Nathan Gilfenbaum  
Patrice Hallock  
Cheryl Hanlon  
Paul and Lisa Henderson  
Allan Johnson  
Marc and Cathie Lacasse  
Stanton T. Lawrence III  
Lawrence Larkin Jr.  
Graham and Page McDonald  
Amanda Merrill  
Howard Mettee  
Joseph and Margaret Moore  
Clyde and Gail Nutter  
Paul and Lauren Nuzzi  
Judith Parks  
Hugh and Jane Philbrick  
Michael Popham and Rebecca Acorn  
Thomas and Ellen Raffio  
Geraldine Riecks  
Rebecca Riecks  
Linda Riendeau  
Keith and Marcia Shahan  
Kathleen Sheehan  
Marjorie Smith  
Neal and Lisa Stacy  
Joanne Stern

Gary and Christine Tedeschi  
John Towne and Rachel Shields-Towne  
James Verschuere  
Claudia Walker  
Doug and Deirdre Watson  
Ken and Margaret Wolcott

**Friends \$50-\$99**

Laurence Babcock and Virginia Stone  
Robert Cardillo  
John and Diana Carroll  
Heidi Chaney  
Lynn Dekraker  
Ann Demong  
Chorney Dunn Family Revocable Trust  
Rachel Eades  
Patricia Edwards  
Katie and Ti Ellis/Crossman  
Katja Fox  
Donald and Cindy Garcia-Rivas  
Jeannie Goodwin  
John and Virginia Guy  
Graham Hayslip  
Phyllis Heilbronner  
Gregory King  
Melissa Lesniak  
Carey Maurice  
Janet Mettee  
Nzenalu Obinelo  
Dennis and Josephine Ortiz  
Kenneth and Karen Pantano  
Gregory Pelletier  
Christine Punchard  
Michael and Crystal Richardson  
The Robichaud Family Trust of 2015  
Ann Schultz  
William and Susan Seagroves

Paul Sorenson  
Peter and Pat Sorenson  
Varney Family Revocable Trust of 2001  
James Waddell  
Thomas and Deborah Walton  
Linda Zorzonello

**Donors up to \$49**

Donald and Patricia Bergeron  
Ialeen Durling  
Mike Gula  
Joshua Hardy  
Walter and Joan Hart  
Olivia Henry  
George and Irene Hervey  
Attorney Andrew Howard  
Peter Hughes  
Jacqueline Karas  
Sandra Keans  
Stephen and Betty Manganiello  
Joseph Merriam and Sharri Goodwin-Merriam  
Jean Odiorne  
Sean Patten  
Thomas and Jacqueline Rzas  
Jan Sylvia Sanders  
Mitchell Weinberg

***Thank  
you for  
your  
support!***

2023

## Board of Directors

Wayne Goss, President

Bryant Hardwick, Vice President

Anthony Demers, Treasurer

Gary Gletow, Secretary

Kristine Baber

Kathy Boisclair

Judge Daniel Cappiello

Tracy Hayes

Ann Landry

Ken Muske

Danielle Pomeroy

Sharon Reynolds

Mark Santoski

Phillip Vancelette

Margaret Wallace

## Community Partners Staff Lead the Way

In 2020 Community Partners went live with EchoVantage, an updated electronic health record, with the promise of organization-specific customizations to meet staff needs. Our IT team, QI team and front-line staff pounced on the opportunity to build better workflows. The EchoVantage system allows our IT team to create custom screens, processes, and reports. Field staff can access the cloud-based system anywhere with a secure Internet connection.

Automated processes have eased the increased documentation requirements associated with many required administrative rule changes. Early Supports and Services clients are now able to move through a significant intake packet with a checklist and one automated email. Clients can complete and sign forms that are then automatically loaded into their client file. Several manual and individual data gathering steps have been replaced by smooth workflows and management analytics. Enhancements to the billing function have reduced the time taken to receive reimbursement by insurers.

**Our IT team is leading the way.**

In September, three of our staff delivered workshops at the Orlando EchoVantage Peer 2 Peer Conference. Workshop titles included, “Nifty Forms to Streamline Workflow,” “Automated Process for the Revenue Cycle,” and “Making EchoVantage Work for You,” outlined for other users how we are improving staff processes.

Based on our progress, other NH Area Agencies are adopting EchoVantage for their EHR and billing functions. As Rachel Bowley, Report Writer/EHR Architect said, “our goal is to configure the EHR to fit staff processes verses changing staff processes to fit the EHR.”



Community Partners IT Staff at the Peer 2 Peer Conference  
L – R Kali Zumpfe, Mark Guptill, Arnold Hill,  
Rachel Bowley  
Front Kellen Reynolds

## Mission Award Recipient 2023 *Lisa Evans*

Each year staff are asked to nominate a co-worker for the Mission Award who best exemplifies the values and principles of our mission. Our mission dictates that in every program we design and offer, we empower our clients to live their best lives in the least restrictive environment possible. This year's Mission Award recipient, Lisa Evans, delivers on that promise everyday.

During most dinner hours at our Bunker Transitional Residential Treatment Program, you'll find Lisa Evans, direct support professional, helping residents create a home cooked meal. Lisa started working at “Bunker” one week before the pandemic lock down began. Throughout that trying and confusing time, she delivered consistent care and connection for the residents. Lisa's coworkers describe her as “the real deal, for whom the job is a way of life.”



Bunker and Northam are Transitional Residential Treatment Programs where young adults who are dually diagnosed with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental illness spend 18-24 months preparing to live independently or with a home provider. During this time Lisa and her co-workers teach life skills like cooking, cleaning, grocery shopping, budgeting, and facilitate community outings. Clients come from around the state to participate in these programs. In addition to home and community-based life skills training, they receive psychiatric care, nurse oversight and group or individual therapy. The Agency recently received a state grant to outfit an apartment at the Northam house to accommodate two more residents, which will increase the total residents to eight.

The success of these programs depends on people like Lisa Evans and her co-workers to empower our residents with kind encouragement to build lifelong independent living skills. Please join us in congratulating Lisa Evans as the 2023 Mission Award winner!